"I went out to the garage to get a tent down from the rafters. I grabbed a bag, pulled it over the edge, and it turned out to be aluminum poles. I fell down and landed on the cement. I was aware that one of my arms was working but the other one wasn’t. Some boys riding by on their bikes heard something, wondered what it was, came back to see what was going on, and called 911 for help."

This is the last series of events Arnie Rethemeier remembers from the day, and days following, his traumatic fall. The well-loved former Perham High School ag teacher hit a garden trailer as he was falling off the ladder, complicating his injuries. The blow to the side of the head hit him directly behind his right ear and sent him bouncing onto his back on the concrete floor.

As a result of the fall, Arnie lost hearing in his right ear, broke his shoulder blade, and suffered three cracks to his skull. The impact to his skull would end up causing months of short-term memory issues for Arnie. He would also later learn that he had a torn rotator cuff as a result of the accident.

Thankfully, help arrived quickly and Arnie’s road to recovery, although long, has been a journey filled with one victory after another. As soon as his accident occurred on August 2, 2014, Arnie was transported by ambulance to the emergency department at Perham Health.

"Within minutes we had rescue people here," recalls Arnie’s wife, Carol. "Arnie was awake all the way to the Perham hospital. They called for a helicopter because of his head injury and started doing tests right away in Perham. It was probably less than an hour from the time of the accident until when the helicopter came. Everything moved very quickly."

As her husband underwent brain imaging and was put into an induced coma for the helicopter transport, Carol says she was impressed by both the quality and efficiency of care at Perham Health. Despite the challenging nature of her husband’s injuries, she says everyone maintained a calm atmosphere in the emergency room, which really helped the family cope with the traumatic situation.

Carol also mentions how impressed she was that by the time her husband arrived in Fargo, they already had information from Perham Health detailing the extent of his injuries. One of the main ways that information is shared is through Perham Health’s My Chart secure online health connection. "We work hard to maintain accurate medical records so that anybody who sees our patients is able to rely on it to be current," explains Dr. Mark Paulson, Arnie’s primary care physician at Perham Health.

Arnie spent 22 days in the Intensive Care Unit at Sanford Health in Fargo and was then released to general care and eventually rehabilitation. As a very active individual, Arnie adapted well to the rigorous therapy schedule. Carol recalls, "They would get him up in the morning and then he would have occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech and language. They’d serve him lunch, he’d take a nap, and then it would start all over again."

“It was good. It worked,” Arnie adds.

Arnie spent a total of 75 days in the hospital system after his accident. Once he was cleared to come home, he continued with his speech/language and occupational therapy. He was also fitted with a cochlear hearing device that helped him regain the hearing that he lost in his right ear because of the fall.

Arnie and Carol Rethemeier are thankful for the immediate, high-quality care Arnie received at Perham Health after a devastating fall he experienced last summer. After a long recovery, Arnie is now back home and thankful to have his health back.
After five months of struggling with arm pain related to his accident, Arnie underwent rotator cuff surgery in January 2015. A week after his surgery, he started physical therapy at Perham Health with Dave Dahl. Physical therapy is important after a rotator cuff repair in order to prevent stiffness and damage to the repair, treat pain, build strength, and help patients recover arm function.

Arnie says he is thankful for the outstanding physical therapy he was able to receive so close to home. With physical therapy scheduled twice a week from mid-January through April, he appreciated not having to travel out of town for his appointments.

Right away, Arnie’s physical therapy focused primarily on passive range of motion exercises to protect his repair and prevent stiffness. Lingering stiffness in his shoulder from the scapular fracture he sustained during his fall made the recovery and rehab process more complicated for Arnie than what would be typical for a rotator cuff repair.

“After a period of healing, we progressed to exercises where Arnie had some help using a stick or a pulley to move his arm,” Dahl explains. “Eventually, I had him moving the arm on his own and using weights and elastic bands for resistance to build his strength. We also did some functional training to simulate specific activities he needed to do to return to his occupation.”

“Dave Dahl is just excellent,” Arnie comments. “He is so knowledgeable and used many creative methods to help me regain my mobility. I appreciated how he geared the therapy around getting me back to my regular lifestyle.”

“Arnie has an outstanding attitude and was committed to get back to work no matter what. He put the time into his home exercise program, with his wife’s help, and overcame all obstacles, including a lot of painful stretching,” Dahl remarks. “Physical therapists often say ‘you get out of it what you put into it,’ and Arnie put everything into it. I am very pleased with how much function he recovered. Getting him back to work was a challenge that I enjoyed.”

After having limited use of his arm for many months, Arnie is pleased to note that he now has 100 percent use back in his arm. This spring he returned to his job with the East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District as an irrigation tech. One of the perks of the job is the opportunity he has to work with a number of his former students. After 35 years as the ag teacher at Perham High School, Arnie retired from teaching in 2000.

On the day of Arnie’s accident, Carol mentions how meaningful it was that two of the emergency responders happened to be some of her husband’s former students. “Both of them stayed with us over at the hospital until the helicopter came and took him to Fargo,” she recalls, adding how this type of personal care ended up being such a blessing throughout Arnie’s entire recovery process. “There were so many people along the way who did way above what was required. There was always a personal touch, which I found to be very impressive.”

In the future, Arnie will have additional follow-up testing to make sure his recovery is proceeding as well as possible. In the meantime, he’s back working and actively pursuing his former hobbies. Both Arnie and Carol are U of M Master Gardeners, and are once again actively involved with the program. In addition to gardening, the couple enjoys camping and spending time with their grandchildren. They even have a bike trip planned for this August.

“Things are close to normal, but my memory is not back 100 percent yet,” Arnie says. “If you don’t count the things I don’t remember during the accident, I’m probably back to 90-95 percent. I think it’s gone really well.”

Dr. Paulson agrees, “I feel that Arnie has been progressing very well. After his injury, he was very concerned about his well-being and ability to recover, but he has been doing amazingly well. I feel that a lot of this is related to Arnie’s strength and willpower, but also the support that he receives from his family.”

From the moment the ambulance arrived after Arnie’s fall last summer, Carol says her husband received the highest quality of care. Reflecting on the extent of his injuries and the progress he has made in less than one year, she finds herself in awe. “It’s incredible,” Carol summarizes. “It’s no less than a miracle what he’s been able to do.”

Now that Arnie has fully regained his physical strength, he is once again able to spend time cycling, one of Arnie and Carol’s favorite pastimes. With both Arnie and Carol actively involved in the U of M Master Gardeners program, their backyard boasts a stunningly beautiful collection of flowers, plants, and trees.
New equipment helps detect infant hearing loss

When a newborn baby suffers from hearing loss problems, early intervention is critical. To make sure infants are screened properly, Perham Health recently purchased state-of-the-art equipment to help screen for hearing issues with as much accuracy as possible.

“Newborn hearing screening is such an important tool for infants,” explains Megan Hemmelgarn, OB Medical Home Coach. “Almost immediately, we are able to screen your infant for signs of hearing loss and upload that information electronically to the Minnesota Department of Health.”

“We continuously strive to improve the quality of care for all of our patients,” she continues, “That we are the first hospital in the state to provide electronic data is just another example of the progressive nature of care that you should expect at our facility.”

If hearing loss is detected in an infant, intervention begins almost immediately. Perham Health’s OB Director Jill Carlson explains, “There are so many developmental changes that happen to a baby every day. The faster we can detect a hearing loss problem, the better we can avoid any developmental delays. Reporting results directly from our screening equipment to the state removes the possibility of any clerical errors and helps to ensure that all babies are getting the follow-up care they need.”

The newborn hearing screening equipment was purchased with proceeds from Blue on Blue, the annual Perham Health Foundation fundraiser. Each year, the event raises funds for a specific piece of equipment, program, or capital need.

Welcome Doctors Grimes & Glawe

Perham Health is excited to introduce the two newest members of its medical team

Dr. Jessica Grimes is a family medicine physician who will see patients at the Perham Health New York Mills Clinic. Having spent summers at lakes near Perham, the Bismarck, N.D., native had always hoped to eventually move to the area.

Dr. Grimes attended the University of Minnesota where she received a bachelor’s degree in child psychology. She earned a medical degree from St. Louis University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Mo., and completed her residency at St. Louis University Belleville Family Medicine Residency Program in Illinois. Since July 2013, she has practiced medicine at Duke Primary Care, Wake Forest, N.C.

“I love working in family medicine because I like being able to get to know my patients and their families,” states Dr. Grimes. “I try to work with my patients to come up with a health plan that fits their lifestyle. I like all aspects of family medicine, but I am particularly interested in women's health, working with children, and preventative medicine.”

Dr. Grimes is married to her husband, Matthew, and they have two children; Caitlin, 13, and Rowen, one. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, pickling and making jams, traveling, watching movies, and spending time with family and friends.

To make an appointment with Dr. Grimes at the Perham Health New York Mills Clinic, call (218) 385-1800.

Dr. Brett Glawe grew up on a dairy farm outside Vergas, Minn. He graduated from Perham High School and attended St. Olaf College where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry and biology. Dr. Glawe received his medical degree at the University of Minnesota Medical School and completed his surgery residency at Iowa Methodist Medical Center, Des Moines. Dr. Glawe will join Dr. Randel Stolee in the Perham Health Surgery Center. He will see patients at the Perham and New York Mills Clinics.

“My goal is to improve and restore the quality of life for my patients, returning them to the activities they enjoy,” states Dr. Glawe. “I believe with passion, an open ear, thorough evaluation, and hard work, we can work together to achieve this goal. I also think it is important to treat each patient as an individual with unique needs and to provide patient education such that they can participate and feel confident in their care. I look forward to working with the other physicians and staff at Perham Health to provide excellent care.”

Dr. Glawe’s family includes his wife Michaela and their children Kaylee, 13, and one-month-old son, Henrik. The Glawe’s enjoy spending time with their families, traveling, fishing, camping, trying unique foods, and going to Broadway shows.
Perham Health is pleased to announce the recipients of its Health Care Career Educational Scholarship. Six area students pursuing careers in the health care field were each awarded a $1000 scholarship. The scholarship is awarded to high school seniors or post-secondary students residing in the Perham Health service area. Congratulations to this year’s recipient.

### Perham Health Scholarship Recipients

- **Natalie Murphy**  
  Perham High School  
  Natalie will pursue physical therapy at the University of North Dakota. Her parents are Tom and Betty Murphy.

- **Colin Neitzke**  
  Perham High School  
  Colin will attend the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, as a biology and physiology major and further pursue a doctorate in dermatology. His parents are Timothy and Laura Neitzke.

- **Zachary Bauck**  
  New York Mills High School  
  Zachary will study nursing at North Dakota State University. His parents are Mike and Teri Bauck.

- **Micah Esala**  
  New York Mills High School  
  Micah will attend Concordia College, Moorhead, as a biology major and pre-medicine student. His parents are Gregory and Adele Esala.

- **Mariah Novak**  
  New York Mills High School  
  Mariah is enrolled at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology as a biomedical engineering major. Her parents are Blaine and Lisa Novak.

- **Jeanne Brandvold**  
  MState, Detroit Lakes  
  Jeanne attends MState Detroit Lakes in the registered nurse program.